

# HEALTH NEWS YOU CAN USE



**Boy**, noun: a noise with dirt on it.

~Not Your Average Dictionary

**I Pledge to Live Healthier by:**  
**Eating from the five food groups**  
**Being active at least 60 minutes each day**  
**Drinking lots of water**  
**Reducing my screen time**  
**Getting plenty of sleep at night**

## FITNESS ACTIVITIES

**Let's Play Tag!** There are many variations of the game [Tag](#) -- it can be a game of individuals or teams, played with minimal or no equipment, and it keeps kids running or moving quickly. It can be played outside or inside, with youth of all ages. One variation combines tag with nutrition and another with the alphabet:

**Fruit and Vegetable Tag** Players must call out the name of a fruit or vegetable to avoid being tagged, but they can't use one that's already been used. If they can't think of a new fruit or vegetable to call out before they are tagged, they become "it." After about 20 fruits or vegetables have been used, players can switch to using names of grains or dairy or the meat/beans food group.

**Alphabet Tag** The person who's "it" calls out a letter of the alphabet. Each person must then call out a word beginning with that letter to avoid being tagged. When a new person is "it," he or she chooses a new letter of the alphabet.

See dozens of [Tag](#) games, including old favorites such as Freeze Tag; Duck, Duck, Goose; Cops and Robbers.

## FAST FACT

*Botanically, tomatoes are a fruit: a fruit is defined as the edible part of the plant that contains seeds, while a vegetable is the edible stems, leaves and roots. Thomas Jefferson was one of the first Americans to grow tomatoes, called "love apples" at the time.*



## NUTRITION ACTIVITIES

**Sugar experiment** Bring in different kinds of cola, fruit juices, energy drinks and other beverages. Have youth read the labels to find out how much sugar is in one serving of each, e.g. a 12-oz. can of Pepsi has 41 grams of sugar. Use a measuring spoon to put that amount into a ziplock bag. (4 grams of sugar = 1 teaspoon) Mark each bag with the name of the drink and leave bags out to remind everyone just how much sugar they're consuming each time they drink that beverage. You can then remind youth that water is the best choice for quenching thirst. Our bodies are primarily made up of water and we need to replace it often. *This is also a good math exercise with conversion of grams to teaspoons and tablespoons.*

**Healthy Habits** Materials needed for this activity: A large chart; stickers for each child. Discuss and make a list of healthy habits. Examples: I eat three servings of fruit daily  
I am active at least 60 minutes daily  
I sleep at least ten hours (for kids age 9)  
I drink water instead of soda  
My "screen time" is less than two hours daily  
Chart all suggestions and give each child a set of stickers. Establish "Healthy Habit Time" daily so children can place stickers on the chart by each of the healthy habits they practiced that day. At the end of each week or other designated time frame, reward the child who has the most stickers with something that is health-related: Perhaps they get to choose the game you play that day or receive a certificate: "I am a Healthy Kid."